Provincial Agricultural Land Commission Annual Report

for the year ended
31 March 1985

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Burnaby, B.C.
V5G 4K6

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Province of
British Columbia

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

Ministry of
Agriculture and Food

Parliament Buildings
Victoria
British Columbia
V8V 1X4
Phone: 387-3656

The Honourable Robert Gordon Rogers
Lieutenant Governor in Council
Province of British Columbia

May It Please Your Honour:

Herewith I beg respectfully to submit the Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for the year ended 31 March 1985.

Harvey W. Schroeder
Minister of Agriculture and Food

British Columbia
Agricultural
Land Commission

Telephone: (604) 660-7000

Room 133, 4940 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 4K6

The Honourable H. W. Schroeder
Minister of Agriculture and Food
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B. C.
V8V 1X4

Dear Mr. Schroeder:

Pursuant to Section 28 of the Agricultural Land Commission Act, I respectfully submit the Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for the year ended 31 March 1985.

Yours very truly

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

M. F. Clarke, Chairman

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OVERVIEW

The Provincial Agricultural Land Commission is an independent Crown Corporation responsible for the administration of the Agricultural Land Commission Act in the Province of British Columbia. The Act enables the Commission to designate zones restricting land use for agricultural purposes referred to as Agricultural Land Reserves (ALR). In all, a total of 4,686,463 hectares of land are designated as ALR throughout the Province.

The Commission's overall objectives are to preserve agricultural land for farm use and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of farms, and the use of land in an Agricultural Land Reserve compatible with agricultural purposes.

The Agricultural Land Commission Act is only one aspect of the larger overall Provincial objective of preserving agricultural land and enhancing agricultural production throughout British Columbia. Other agricultural support programs initiated and administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food complement this program and together have accounted for the strengthening of the agricultural industry throughout the Province over the past 13 years.

The Commission is accountable to the Legislature through the Minister of Agriculture and Food, the Honourable Harvey Schroeder.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

This report summarizes the work of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for the fiscal year 1984-1985. Unlike the previous two fiscal years, 1984 could be described as a relatively stable year for the Commission's operations. In other words, the downsizing of the Commission staff and budget in keeping with the drastically reduced provincial economy had already taken place prior to the start of the year under review.

There were several changes in the membership of the Commission during the course of the year. On 30 November 1984 Arthur Sutcliffe of Creston retired from the Commission. In addition to being recognized as a successfull farmer, Mr. Sutcliffe had considerable experience as a municipal councellor and regional district chairman. His agricultural experience as well as his involvement in municipal and regional government added considerably to the Commission's knowledge base. Mr. Sutcliffe's successor is Vernon W. Speer, a well known cattle rancher in the Quesnel area. Also in December, Ian D. Paton of Delta, completed four years as a member of the Commission. Much to the Commission's advantage, Mr. Paton agreed to accept re-appointment for a further three years.

Effective 30 April 1985, I have decided to step aside from my position as Chairman and as author of this section of the report, one is tempted after five years to "sermonize", a temptation which one's better judgement says should be strongly resisted. A few observations are perhaps warranted, however.

On the positive side there are clear indications that Commission dialogue with municipalities and regional districts is freer and more positive today than it was five years ago. Secondly, significant progress has been made in the development of Community and Settlement Plans in virtually all areas of the province. Lately it has been notable that as new plans or plan updates come before the Commission there are relatively few instances of intrusion into agricultural lands.

Protocol agreements with the Ministry of Highways and the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing have eliminated former bottlenecks and greatly increased the efficiency of operation. Likewise general orders for the protection of agricultural land as well as for its rehabilitation following such activities as gravel extraction, oil and gas drilling, placer mining activities and the placement of temporary mobile homes, have increased the Commission's efficiency of operation and at the same time have made it uniformly clear to those engaged in the activities mentioned as to what is required of them.

On the negative side the first point to come to mind is the non-farm/agricultural conflict. Residences adjacent to farms cause many difficulties. Householders object to the noises and occasional odours associated with livestock and in many instances are upset by spraying activities in orchards. Municipalities are generally well aware of the problems and through careful planning can provide adequate buffering. In the case of intensive livestock production the development of "green zone" regulations by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food acting co-operatively with the industry, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the Commission should largely overcome the objections of residents who live in close proximity to such operations.

A second negative is the perception by some that the ALR's provide an excellent land bank that can be drawn upon to meet future urban land needs as they arise. Those that hold this view are noticeably fewer but nonetheless they control substantial areas as witnessed by the number of development companies owning prime agricultural lands in the Lower Mainland.

Efforts to improve the effectiveness of forward land use planning have been a major thrust by a succession of Commissioners since the Act was formulated some 12 years ago.

A great deal has been achieved in this direction. However, despite the fact that adequate supplies of land outside of the ALR are available for practically all non-agricultural activities in even the more densely populated regions of the province, the pressures for urban uses will continue to be strong. This is despite the evidence for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, as one example, that the rate of population growth had slowed noticeably some years in advance of the 1982 recession.

The achievement of the positive gains referred to cannot be claimed unilaterally by the Commission. Rather they are advances achieved over time by the combined efforts of all concerned - the Commission, local government, ministries of senior government, agricultural organizations and interested citizens. The work of the Commission has been made easier and more productive by the participation of all of these agencies. Furthermore it has been singularly fortunate in having a very capable and dedicated staff organization. Acknowledgement is also extended to the expert staff resources available to the Commission from the Ministries of Agriculture and Food, Municipal Affairs, Environment, Lands, Parks and Housing, and Forests. Throughout this process it would be remiss not to mention the support extended by the agricultural industry particularly the Federation of Agriculture, B.C. Cattlemen's Association, the various commodity Marketing Boards, the B.C. Institute of Agrologists and the Farmer's Institutes.

MEMBERSHIP - 31 MARCH 1985

M. F. Clarke, Chairman
Former Director, Agriculture Canada Research Station, Agassiz
Former Co-ordinator, Forage Crops Research, Agriculture Canada, Ottawa

C. E. Framst
Retired farmer (grain and forage seeds)
Peace River Liard Regional District Board
Member for 12 years, Chairman for 7 years
Member Farm Credit Corporation Appeal Board

R. P. Murdoch
Former Manager, University Endowment Lands
Former Regional Director,
Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing

I. D. Paton
President, Paton & Smith Farm Services Limited
Past President, B.C. Institute of Agrologists

V. W. Speer
Retired Rancher; Incorporated Green Mountain Ranch Company in 1963
Past President & instrumental in the founding of the Kersley Livestock Association
Past President of Quesnel Livestock Association

WHY PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND?

Agriculture is an important industry in British Columbia, yet each year we import over 50% of our food requirements from outside the Province. As populations continue to increase many of our present food suppliers are finding that they have less surplus for export and the prices of these foods are gradually growing higher. At some time in the future, we in British Columbia may have to produce more of our own food. The question is, will we still have that option?

When one considers the land resource in B.C., it is generally felt that we are more than adequately endowed. However, due to our complex topography and varied climates, the land area available for agricultural use is very limited. In fact, only about 4% of our total land area has a combination of climate and soil characteristics that will support agricultural production.

Unfortunately, the same lands that are suitable for agriculture in B.C. are also in great demand for other land uses. Some of these competing uses, such as forestry, wildlife and certain types of recreation, do not permanently damage the future ability of the land to produce food. Other uses, however, are irreversible. Houses, shopping malls, highways, and industries have already taken thousands of hectares of our best farmland, and these lands have been lost for agricultural use forever.

If we in British Columbia want to retain the option to grow our own food, we must preserve what remains of our limited agricultural land resource.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVES

The Agricultural Land Reserve in British Columbia totals approximately 4.7 million hectares. ALR lands are located in every Regional District and include both private and Crown owned lands, farmed and vacant lands. In order to facilitate its objectives, the Act establishes a Commission and provides for a General Manager and Staff. The support staff, which consists of 21 persons, are located in one office and are responsible for the daily administration of the legislation.

The Commission has maintained a policy of keeping its staff to a close knit working group, thus avoiding the pitfalls of burgeoning bureaucracy. The concept has been to use the expertise and assistance of personnel from other government resource agencies and in particular the Commission has relied extensively on the services of the extension and resource people of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Over the past year, the government's ongoing restraint program has resulted in a downsized Ministry staff. Consequently the inter-relationship between the Commission and Ministry staff has been strengthened. With the loss of staff from the Soils Branch and the Property Management Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Commission has noted that the ability to respond to our needs is not as effective as we would like. We are confident that adjustments will be made over the next year to improve that situation.

While the number of applications proposing non-farm developments have decreased during the past fiscal year the Commission has continued to emphasize the advantages and importance of inter-governmental co-operation and consultation. As an example, the Commission has carried on with its innovative approach in reviewing specific development proposals and, where considered appropriate has made conditional approvals based on specific site characteristics. In one case in the Lower Fraser Valley the local government and developer have been advised that the Commission will exclude specific lands once all other approvals are in place. In this case, the Commission has maintained the option for the lands to be used for future agricultural purposes in case other pre-development requirements cannot be met. This approach has been used in other situations around the Province and signifies the Commission's willingness to be flexible in working together with local governments responsible for long range land use planning.

The involvement of the Commission in decision making situations concerning transportation and other linear corridors, i.e. proposed routings for highways, local road networks, power lines, etc., is probably not very widely known. The Commission's activities have resulted in the achievement of modifications to many proposed routes which have eliminated or reduced potential adverse agricultural impacts. During the past year, two major transportation corridor proposals were reviewed and commented upon by the Commission - these were the Coquihalla Highway (Hope to Kamloops via Merritt) and the Annacis Island crossing of the Fraser River, with particular emphasis on the Gilley Road east-west alignment through the Municipality of Richmond connecting to Highway 99.

The Commission also has an active role in the community and settlement planning process in the Province. The coincident locational relationship between settlement patterns and agricultural land has dictated that most communities in B.C. have some ALR lands within their jurisdiction. Throughout this past year the Commission has personally met with several Councils and Boards in an effort to further improve the long established working relationships and to stress the importance of considering the ALR in formulating policies and long term planning goals. The Commission has reviewed hundreds of settlement and community plans since its inception and views its role in the land allocation process as crucial to the long term success of the agricultural land preservation program.

The Commission continued with its role in the Enhanced Fine Tuning Program, which is a co-operative effort of the Ministries of Environment, Agriculture and Food, and the Agricultural Land Commission.

Funding for the program is provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and $579,262.00 was budgeted for the 1984 - 1985 fiscal year. The Agricutlural Land Commission portion of the fund was $133.225.00. This amount covers the salary expense of the three positions involved - a planner, an agrologist and a draftsman who review, prepare and present the applications to the Commission for a recommendation, which is then forwarded to Cabinet for final consideration. The remaining funds ($446,037.00) are allocated to the Ministry of Environment for the collection of biophysical information. The Program has a complement of 13 FTE's which are included within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's complement.

The original intent of the Program was to provide new and additional biophysical information to the Commission to assist it in the review of existing ALR boundaries in specific regions of the province. While the program continues to satisfy the original intent, it has become evident that the information collected and compiled, such as soils information maps, climate information, water availability information and new agricultural capability maps is also extremely valuable to other sectors of the government and provides useful information to the resource companies in the private sector.

During the past year the majority of the Fine Tuning work continued to be on the East Coast of Vancouver Island, specifically within the Cowichan Valley and Nanaimo Regional District. Cabinet gave final approval to all outstanding applications in the Cowichan Valley Regional District and had for consideration the first of three applications proposed for the Nanaimo Regional District. The Fine Tuning staff were also involved in the review and preparation of a proposal for the Pemberton Valley area.

In the 1985 - 86 fiscal year it is anticipated that the Commission will complete its review of the Nanaimo Regional District and initiate applications for the southern portion of the Comox Strathcona Regional District and, provided new agricutlural capability maps are available, an application(s) for the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District. In addition, additional applications may be generated in North Saanich as a result of their request for new agricultural capability mapping. It should be noted that North Saanich has agreed to provide some funding for this project.

Funding for the Program is projected to end in March 1986. However, because the results of the soil survey work for the 1985 field season will not be available until March 1986, the Commission will be requesting additional funds to complete the work during the 1986 - 87 fiscal year.

The Commission owned farmlands generated substantial revenue during the year through rentals and other income related to Commission-owned properties. This fact, together with the keen interest shown when Commission lands were advertised for lease are convincing proof that the Commission property management and lease program is continuing to be successful. Under the purchasing option that is available to lessees, one large farm property has been sold and a further property sale is expected to receive Cabinet approval shortly. The revenues thus derived accrue to the general revenue account of the Province.

The Commission, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and with regional and local authorities, is responsible for the administration of the Soil Conservation Act. The purpose of the Act is to preserve, maintain and in some cases enhance the quality of the soil within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The Act is designed to prevent the removal of agricultural soil, the deposition of fill such as construction demolition, control the quality of material being placed on designated ALR's and ensure an acceptable level of rehabilitation.

The Act prohibits the removal of soil from or the deposition of fill material on land located within the ALR without a permit issued through the local authority and approved in writing by the Commission.

Again, as in the last fiscal year, an improvement has been noted in the number of illegal fill violations. As an example, the Township of the Corporation of Richmond has been at the forefront in working with the Commission to curtail illegal filling practices. The co-operation offered by all local governments in administering the Act is greatly appreciated.

Nearly three years ago, the Commission held a number of seminars throughout the Province for municipal, regional district and provincial level staff whose jobs involved direct or indirect contact with the Commission. In February and March 1985, the Commission staged a new session of seminars with the goal being to update those persons working with the Commission on amendments to Commission policy, the Agricultural Land Commission Act and regulations.

The seminars were held in five separate centres around the province and afforded an opportunity for discussion of all matters related to the ALR's. The seminars also allowed the participants to understand how other jurisdictions dealt with similar situations related to the Act.

Approximately 215 persons attended the seminars. A newly developed handbook outlining policy and procedures concerning the administration of the ALR was distributed to those attending the seminars.

On the whole, the seminars were well attended and received. A followup study has concluded that the seminars were worthwhile and as such should be repeated in the future.

STATISTICS

The following pages present a brief summary of the major ALR statistics for the Province. All statistics are based on the calendar year commencing 1 January 1984 to 31 December 1984. For a more complete description of the statistics relating to the ALR's see the report Agricultural Land Reserve Statistics, January 1, 1985 which is available from the Agricultural Land Commission office.

LAND CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION FOR AGRICULTURE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Commission's review of applications is closely tied into the agricultural capability land classification system. This rating system is based on climate and soil characteristics wherein the climate determines the range of crops that can be grown and the soils govern the types and level of management necessary. The ALR areas throughout the Province have been mapped on the basis of this type and the Commission uses these maps as a general guide to agricultural capability assessment.

This classification system gives no indication of the yield or productivity of the land for individual crops or of the unique suitability of certain lands for certain crops. It is only useful as a general indicator of agricultural potential and when the Commission reviews applications it supplements its information base with other parameters such as suitability for general crops, productivity or yield ratings, and homogeneity or integrity of the farming community.

In this classification, mineral and organic soils are each grouped into seven classes according to their potential and limitations for agricultural use. The intensity of limitations becomes progressively greater from Class 1 to Class 7.

Capability Classes

Class 1 wide range of crops, easy to manage

Class 2	wide range of crops, no major difficulty in management
Class 3	crop range might be restricted, moderately intensive management
Class 4	severe restrictions or range of crops, special management practices required
Class 5	restricted to forage production and/or specially adapted crops
Class 6	natural grazing land
Class 7	non-agricultural land

One of the bar charts used in this section groups the agricultural capability classes into four separate categories for statistical purposes:

Prime - Class 1 to 3
the agricultural capability unit consists totally of Class 1 to 3 inclusive
e.g. $2^7 - 3^3$

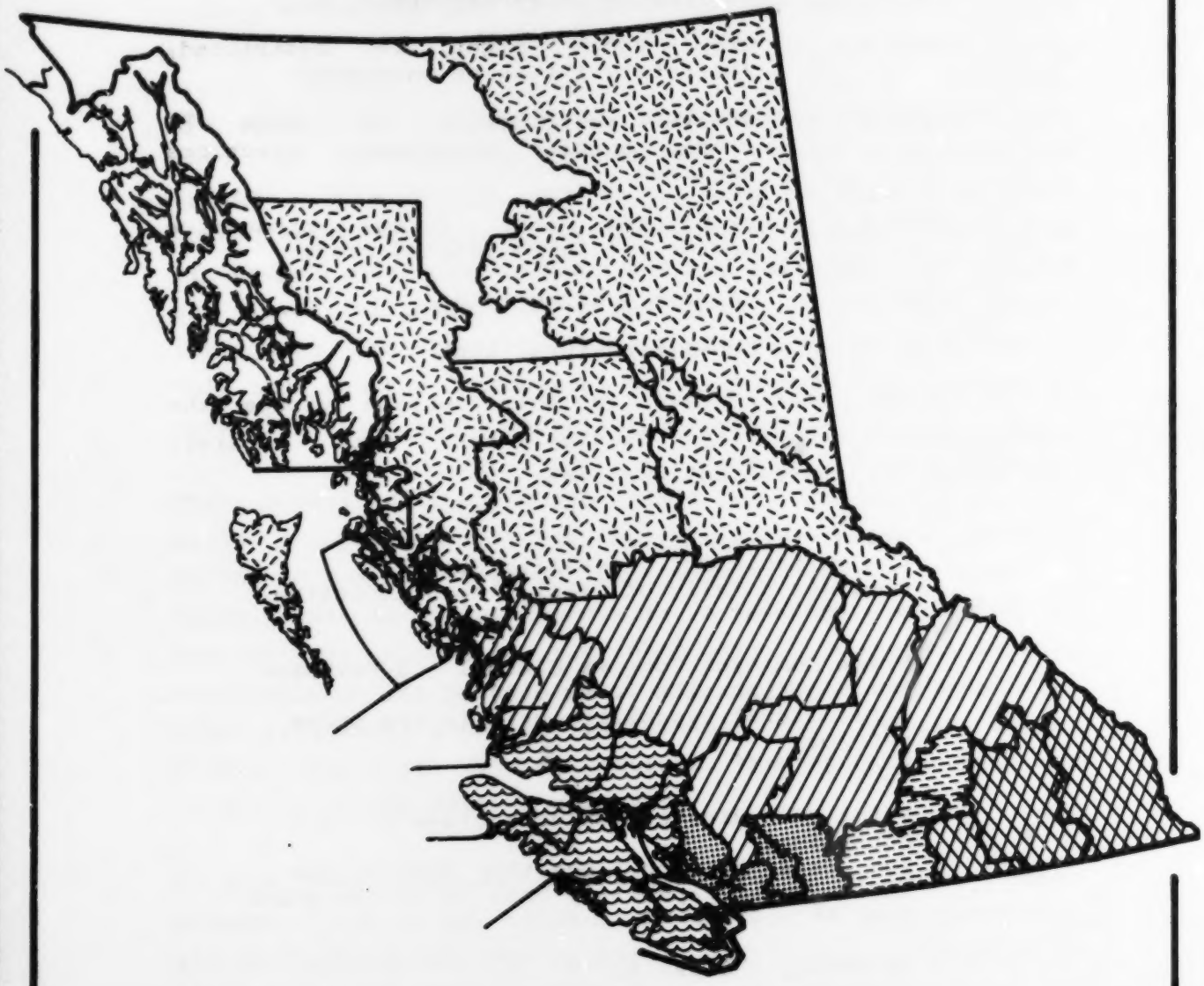
Prime Dominant Complex Class 1 - 3 Dominant
the major portion (over 50%) of the agricultural capability unit is the prime category
e.g. $3^6 - 5^4$

Prime Subordinate Complex - Class 1 - 3 Subordinate
the lesser portion (less than 50%) of the agricultural capability unit is in the prime
e.g. $5^6 - 3^4$

Secondary - Class 4 - 7
the agricultural capability unit consists totally of Class 4 - 7 (including complex if the unit is 4 or poorer)
e.g. $5^6 - 4^3 - 6_1$

In cases where the agricultural capability units indicate a Class 1 - 3 inclusive as 50% (e.g. $3^5 - 4^3 - 5^2$), one half of the area is categorized as prime and one half as secondary.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT



NORTHERN REGION

CENTRAL INTERIOR REGION

OKANAGAN REGION

KOOTENAY REGION

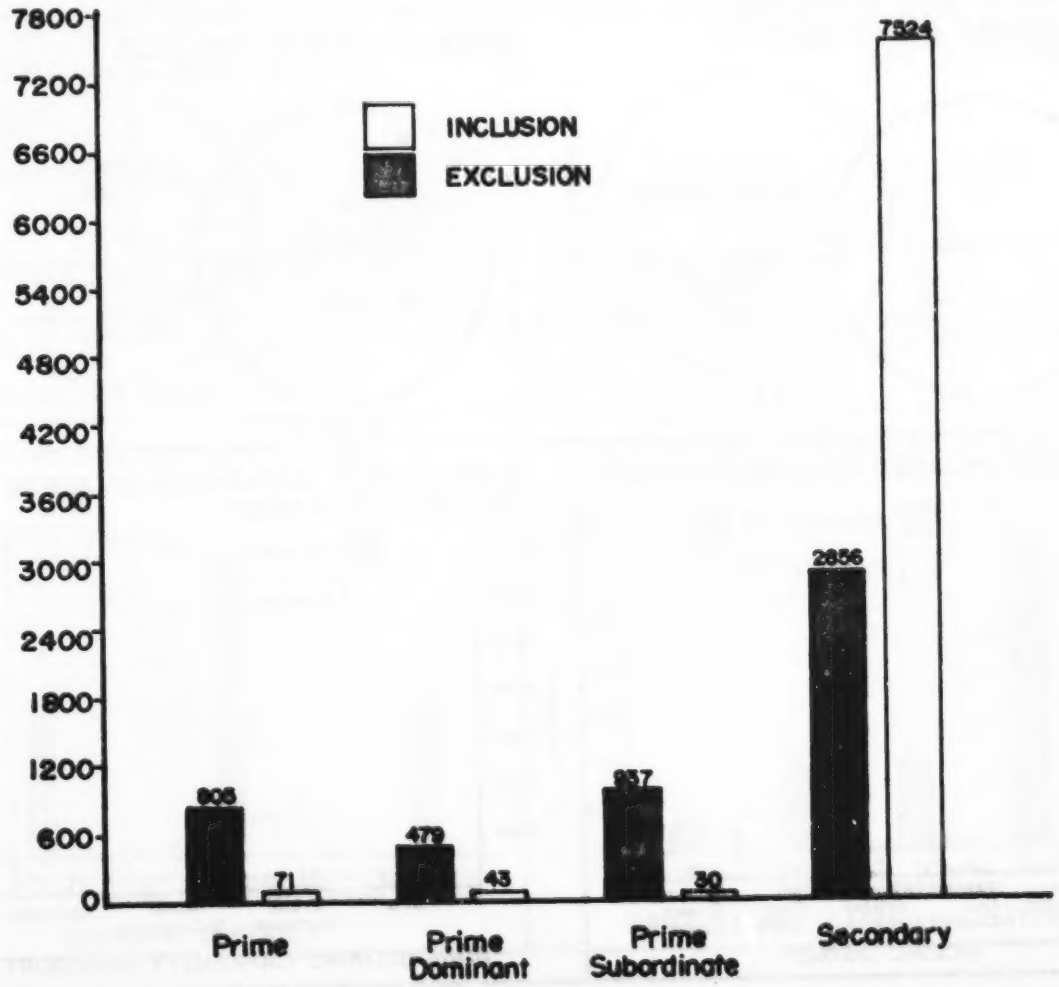
LOWER MAINLAND REGION

VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION

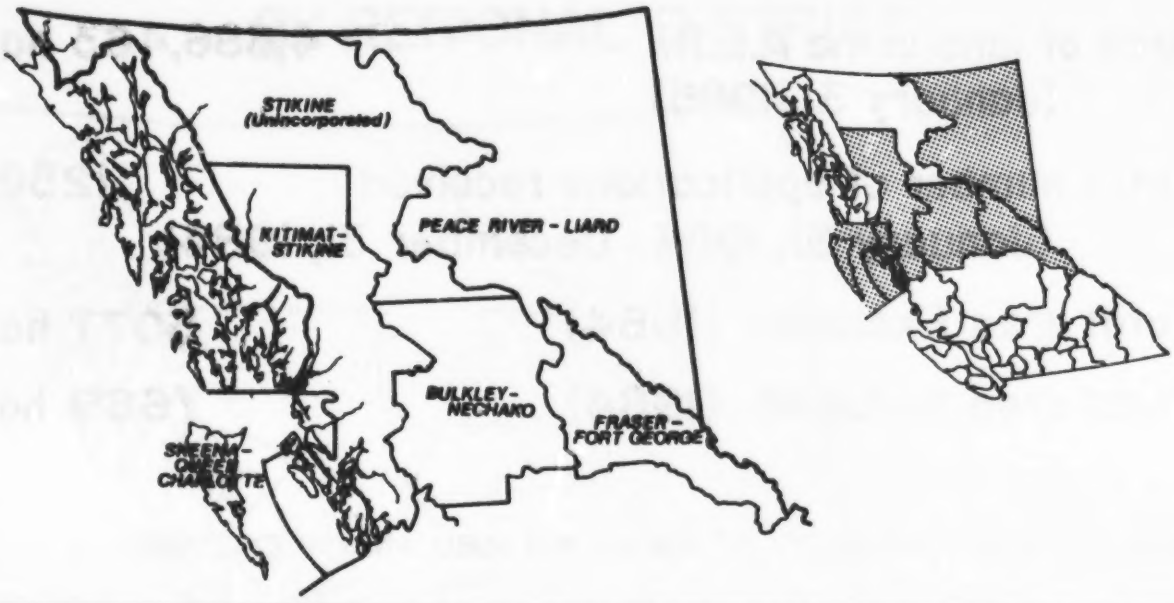
SUMMARY OF A.L.R. STATISTICS FOR 1984

Area of land in the A.L.R. (January 31, 1985)	4,686,463 ha
Total number of applications received (January 31, 1984 - December 31, 1984)	1259
Total area Excluded (1984)	5077 ha
Total area Included (1984)	7669 ha

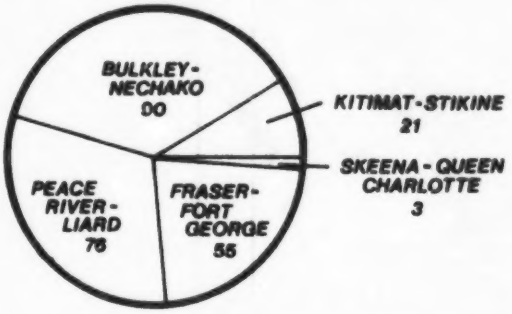
AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED AND/OR EXCLUDED



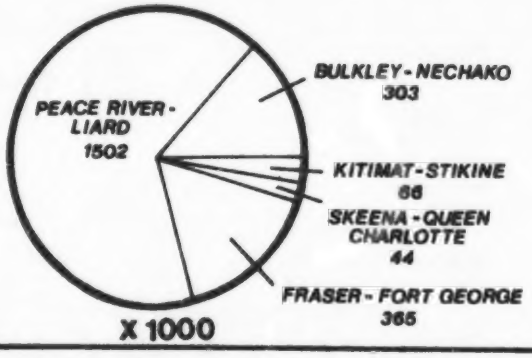
NORTHERN REGION 1984



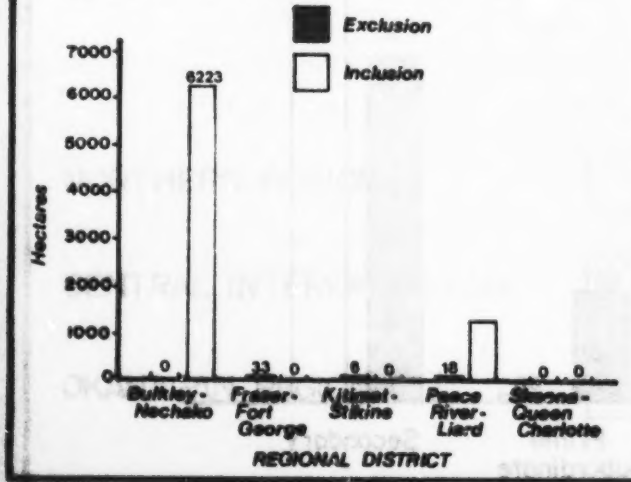
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 245



AREA OF LAND IN THE A.L.R.
2,278,994. ha Jan. 1, 1985



TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



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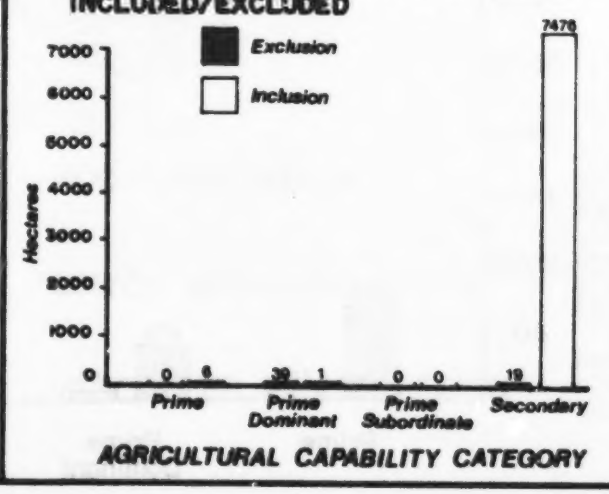
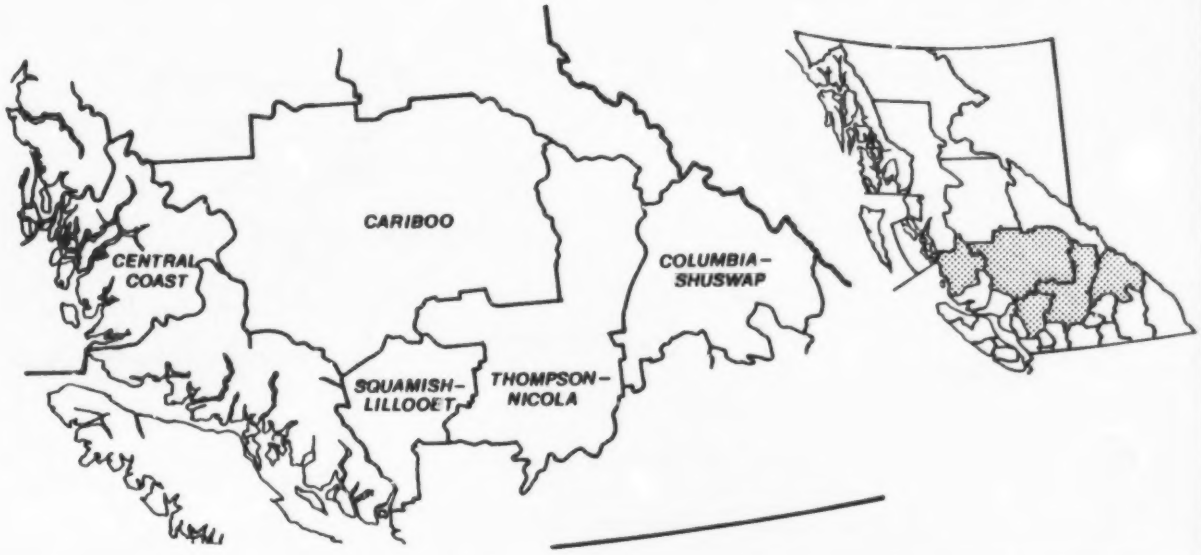
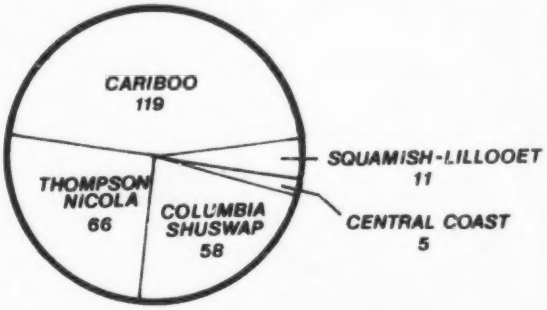


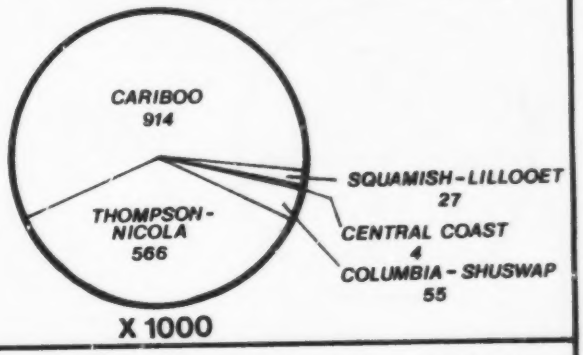
CENTRAL INTERIOR REGION 1984



TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 259

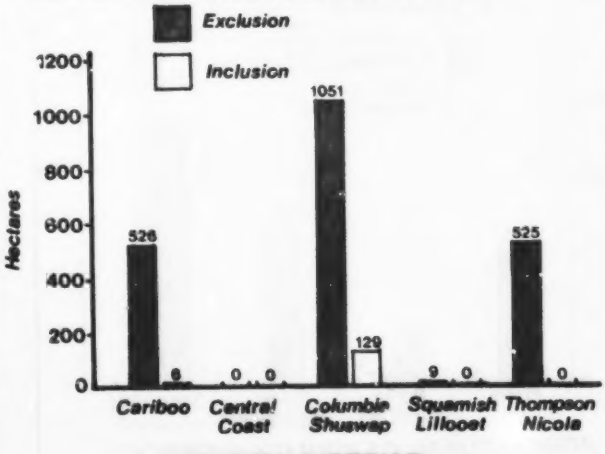


AREA OF LAND IN THE A.L.R.
1,565,540. ha Jan. 1, 1985

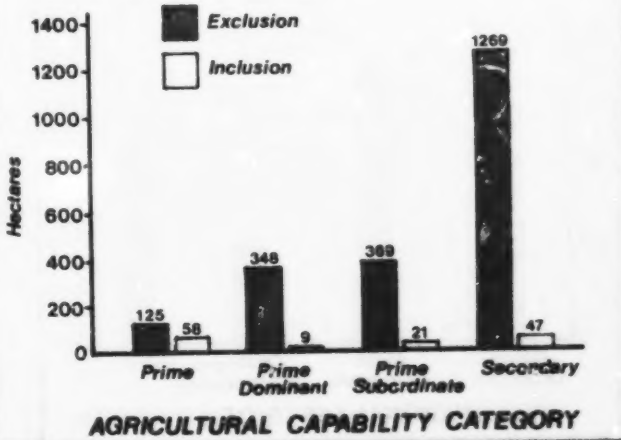


X 1000

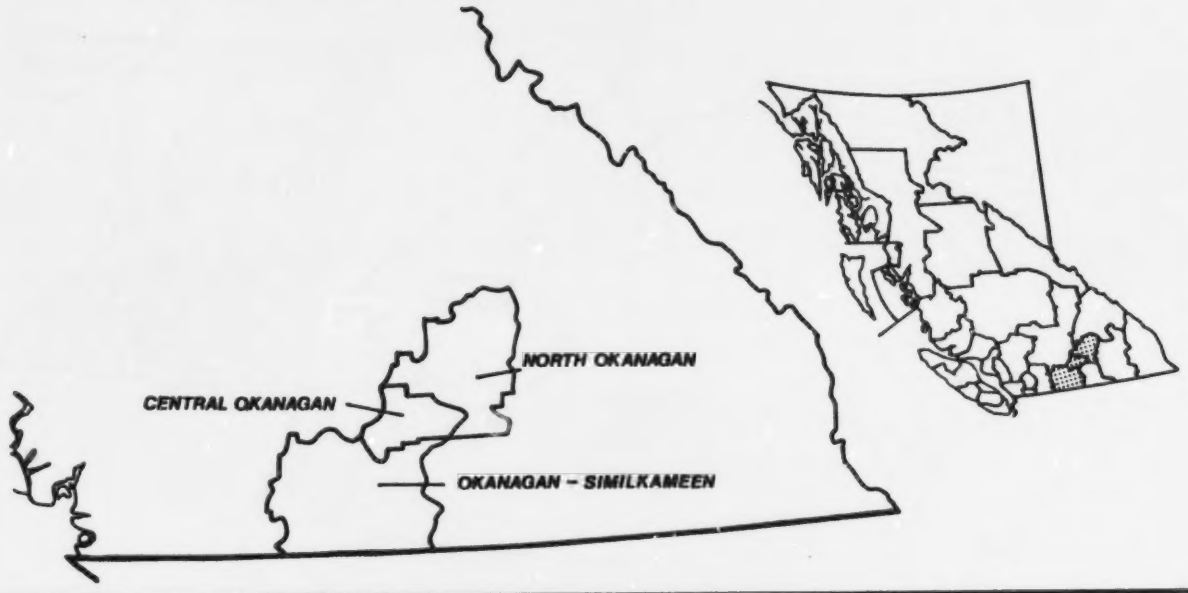
TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



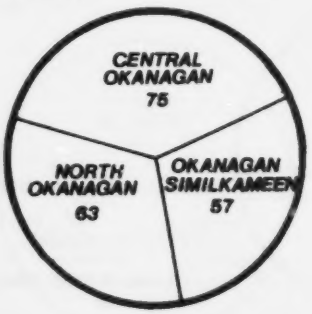
AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



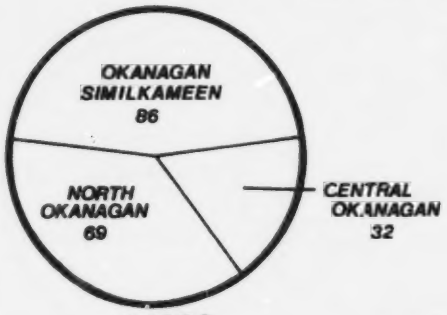
OKANAGAN REGION 1984



TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 195



AREA OF LAND IN THE A.L.R.
187,026. ha Jan. 1, 1985



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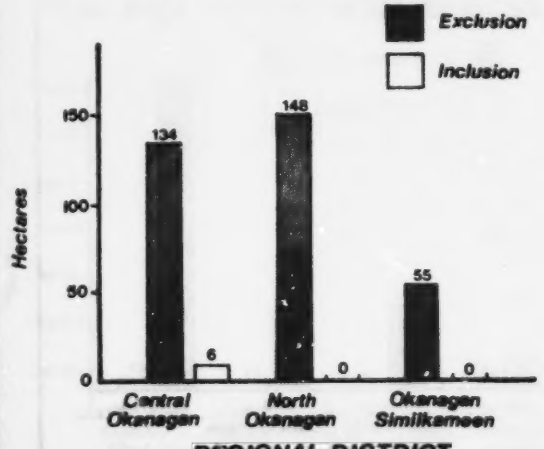
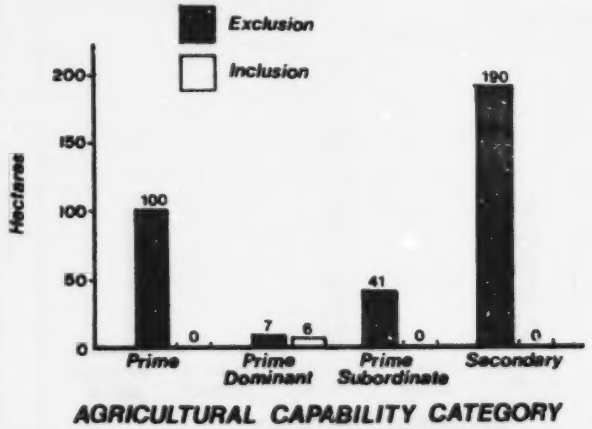
TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED

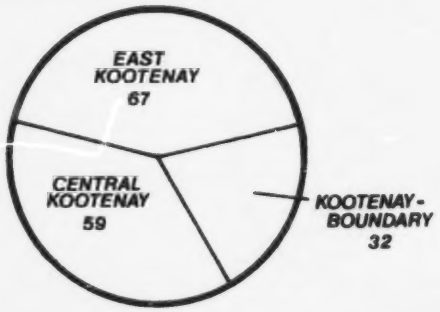


AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



KOOTENAY REGION 1984

TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 158



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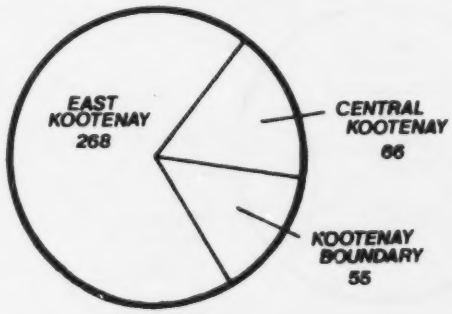
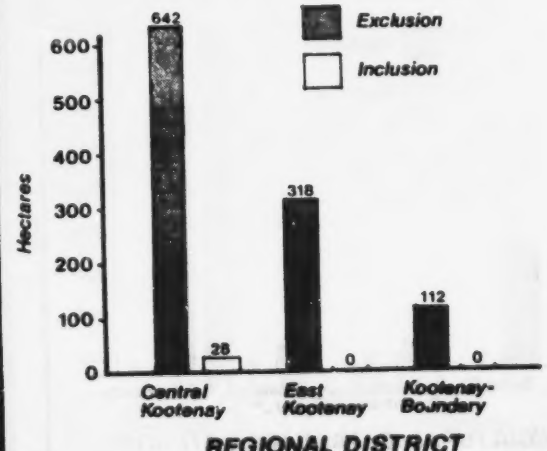
389,312. ha Jan. 1, 1985

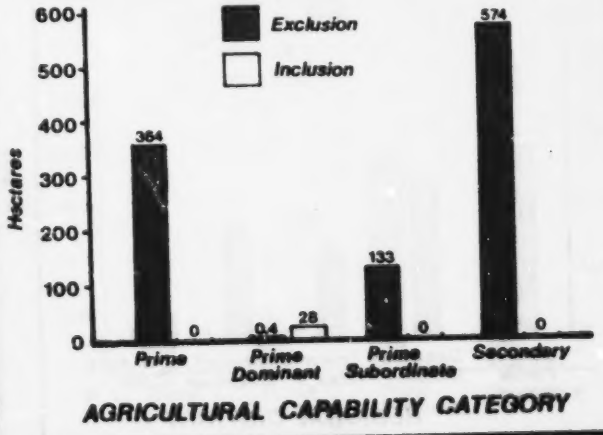


X 1000

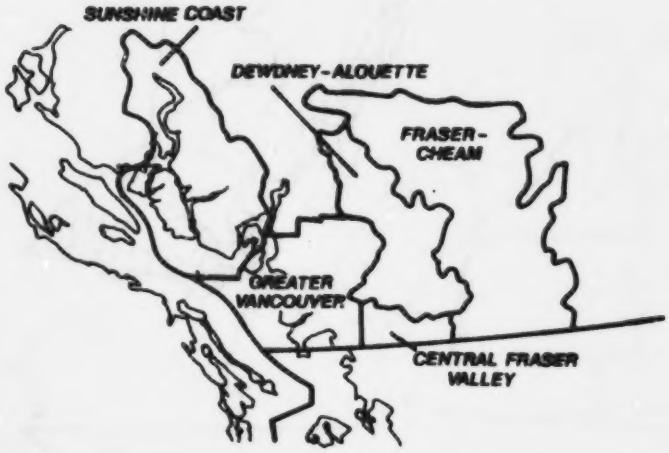
TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



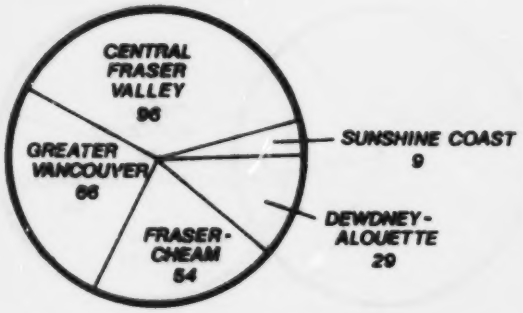
AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



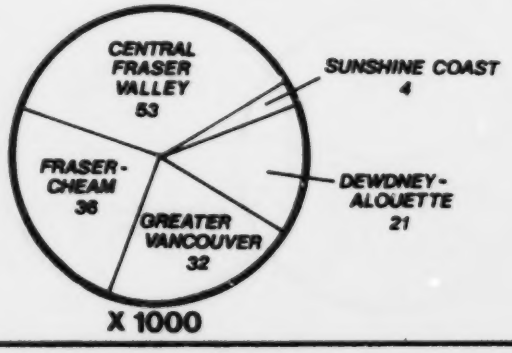
LOWER MAINLAND REGION 1984



TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 254

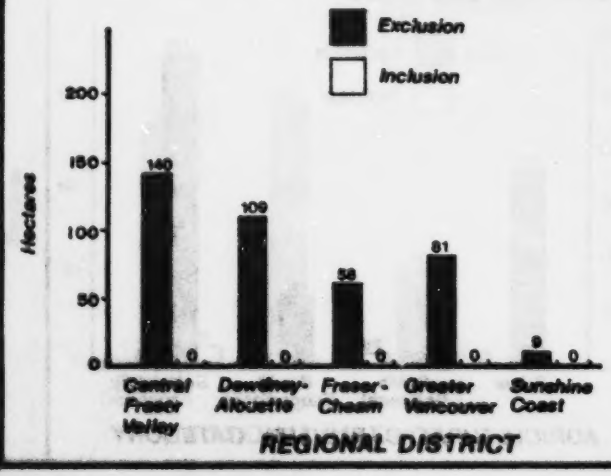


AREA OF LAND IN THE A.L.R. 145,882. ha Jan. 1, 1985

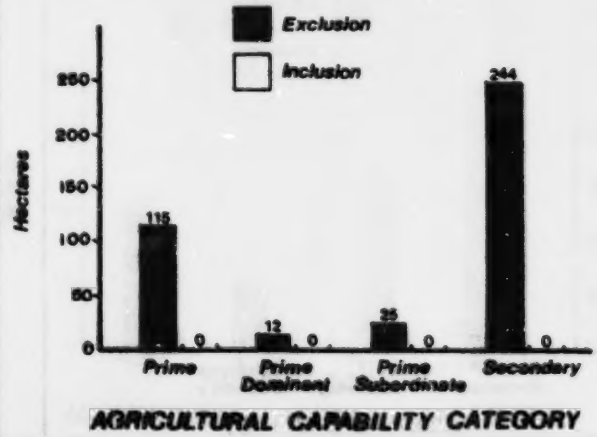


X 1000

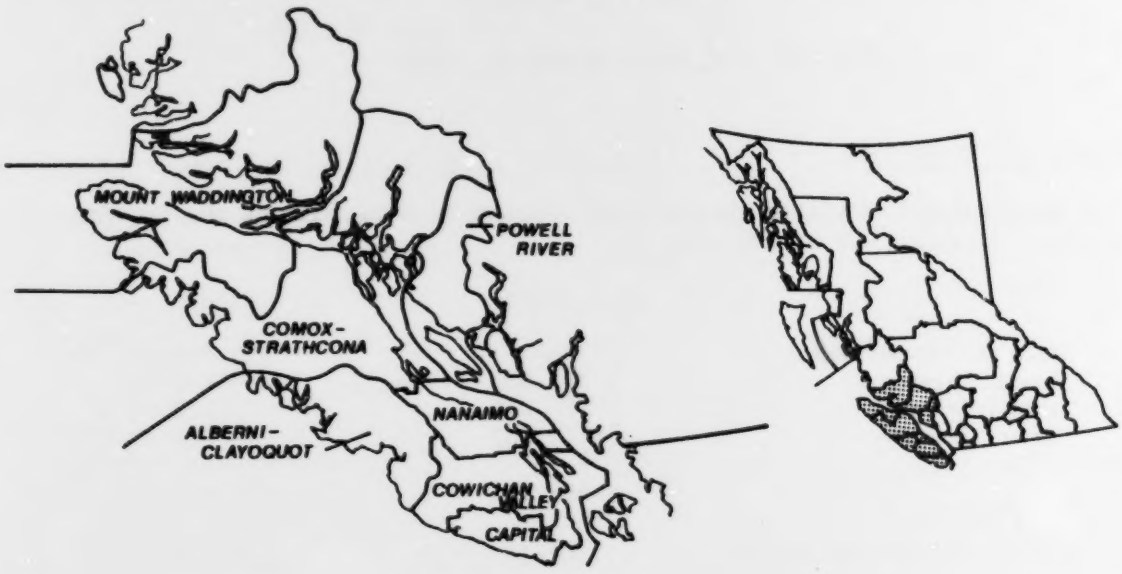
TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



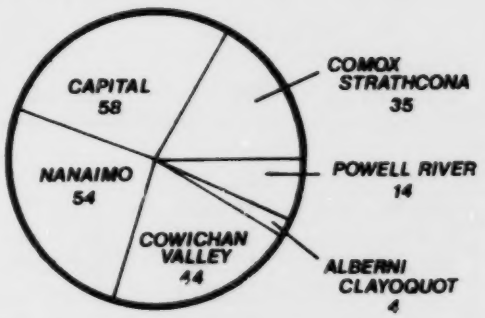
AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



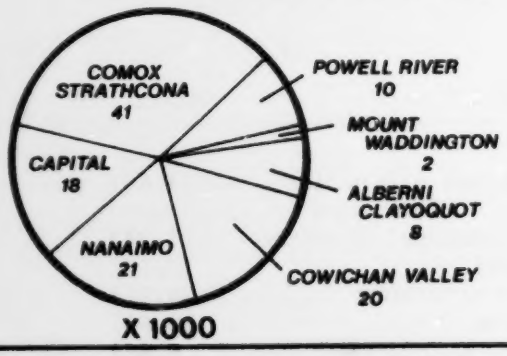
VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION 1984



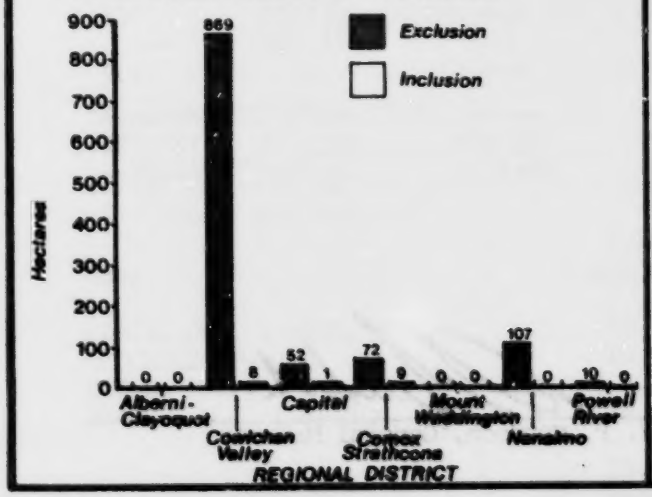
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED 209



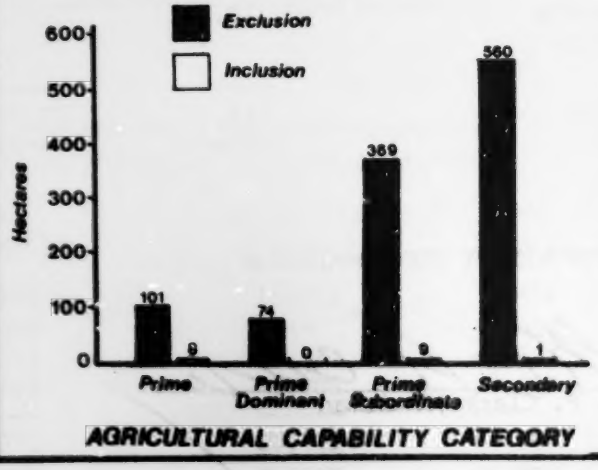
AREA OF LAND IN THE A.L.R. 119,709. ha Jan. 1, 1985



TOTAL AREA INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF AREAS INCLUDED/EXCLUDED



PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1985

STATEMENT OF REVENUES

Income received and credited to the consolidated revenue fund of the Province of British Columbia was as follows:

	84/85	83/84
Sale of Properties	—	151,109
Rental Income	387,553	435,432
Loan Payments	90,278	76,172
Other Income	10,883	16,216
	488,714	678,929
Rental Income Adjustment	23,749	(16,839)
Total Income Accrual Basis	512,463	662,090

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES

Description	Admin.	Fine Tuning	Commissioners	84/85	83/84
Salaries & Benefits	504,607	97,125	—	701,732	612,272
Fees & Allowances	—	3,778	42,650	46,428	68,775
Professional Services	27,242	1,866	—	29,108	28,948
Travel	17,201	4,190	21,189	42,580	55,281
Communications	20,913	—	—	20,913	—
Office	19,657	107	—	19,764	14,415
Furn. & Equipment	5,664	—	—	5,664	—
Material & Supplies	5,232	561	—	5,793	5,390
Rent	565	50	—	615	361
Grants	18,146	—	—	18,146	—
Other	—	—	—	—	239
	719,227	107,677	63,839	890,743	785,681

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

M. P. Clarke, Chairman

R. P. Murdoch, General Manager

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Notes to Financial Report

For the Year Ended March 31, 1985

NOTES:

1. Assets - Land, Buildings & Loans Receivable

Estimated market values for Commission owned and administered properties at March 31, 1985 were as follows:

	84/85	83/84
Land Values	35,760,377	38,942,991
Building Values:		
Government Owned	2,697,054	3,009,408
Lease Owned	2,515,739	2,458,770
Improvement Loans Receivable	759,860	672,952
	41,733,030	45,084,121

2. Contingent Liabilities

The Land Commission requirement to purchase lessee improvements in the event of lessee terminations generates the following contingent liabilities.

	84/85	83/84
Land Improvements	804,541	814,354
Buildings	2,515,739	2,458,770
	3,320,280	3,273,124

3. Accrued Receivables

	84/85	83/84
Accrued Rent & Taxes	56,039	32,290
Accrued Interest	1,520	2,900
	57,559	35,190

4. Compensation Payments

In accordance with leases entered into under the Young Farmers Program, the following compensation payments were made during fiscal 1983/84 as a result of lessee farm failures.

Name	Total Compensation	Amount Due Province	Cash Payment
MAHIL, D.S. & MAHL, S.K.	53,474	16,018	37,456
MCDONELL, Paul B.	16,000	---	16,000
BAEHR, Barry P	5,514	3,987	1,527
BRAICH, S.S. & BRAICH, A.K.	14,983	5,406	9,577
	89,971	25,411	64,560

THE COMMISSION'S FUTURE ROLE

The long term benefits of the agricultural land preservation program are tied to the maintenance of a healthy agricultural community. It is in this sphere that the Commission needs to place more emphasis and priority in the future. The regulatory aspects of the Commission's work are well established and functioning. These need to be balanced by positive efforts aimed at bolstering and supporting the farm community. Issues such as additional financial support programs, education of the public to farming realities and resolving farm/non-farm conflicts need to be addressed. Measures need to be taken to protect the farmer and aid in the fostering of the agricultural industry - to attract young people to farming as a viable career and way of life.

Agriculture is becoming recognized as a full partner in the total land resource equation and with this comes a need for a better balance and integration with other land users. Agricultural lands are extremely important but they are also suitable for and not necessarily incompatible with other uses such as forestry and some limited wildlife or low intensity recreational uses. Next year and the years to come will be very important in terms of our decisions on the allocation of our agricultural land base. Preservation of the resource is the first step, but allocation of the resource is a demanding task that will increasingly require more and more soul searching.

Attempting to foresee the future is always an uncertain exercise. However, the continuance of a sound Agricultural Land Reserve is an important aspect in ensuring that a source of future food supplies is indeed certain.

OBJECTIVES FOR 1985 - 1986 FISCAL YEAR

1. Continue to improve upon the efficiency of the administration of the ALR as well as aiming to further strengthen and maintain the agricultural land base.

2. To review the Commission's policy on homesite severance subdivisions. This policy, which establishes guidelines for the consideration of small acreage homesite subdivsions for retiring farmers, has been in effect for approximately seven years. The Commission, in conjunction with the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, has commenced review of this policy and will undertake a comprehensive analysis of the effects of this policy on the agricultural land base.

3. The Commission will be undertaking a review of the proposed amendments to the Municipal Act and will be forwarding a submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs concerning the foreseen implications of legislative amendments on agricultural lands.

4. The Hazelmere Valley in the Municipality of Surrey is well known for its agricultural importance and value in agricultural products it produces. Because of existing and foreseen development pressures the Commission will be initiating a study to determine the overall agricultural potential of the valley and an assessment of the impact on agriculture from non-farm development.

5. Concerns have been expressed about the impacts of agricultural operations on the water quality of Dragon Lake, located near Quesnel. As the Commission feels this is an important long standing agricultural area it will be initiating a study in conjunction with the Property Management Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to ascertain the implications to long term agricultural uses in the Dragon Lake watershed. The Commission feels this will also be an opportunity to test the guidelines currently being prepared by the Green Zone Committee, whose purpose is to develop methods that will enhance the agricultural use of ALR lands and minimize the potential conflicts with non-farm activities.

6. During the next fiscal year the Commission, in recognition of the unique problems and nature of the tree fruit industry, will be looking into the question of parcel size for orchard operations.

7. The Commission will continue to review the ALR in conjunction with local governments, with an aim to identifying and releasing non-agricultural lands on the basis of justified local need, low agricultural potential or a combination of both as well as including lands currently outside the ALR with high value for agricultural use.

8. To continue the leasing program of Commission owned lands and encourage the agricultural development of such lands. The Commission will be reviewing the properties and the way in which they are being managed with a view to selling the lands to eligible lessees.

9. More emphasis needs to be placed on measures to obtain a comprehensive assessment of the quality of any land for agricultural purposes. The Commission's efforts during the next fiscal year will be geared toward providing a strong focus on the development of varied but comprehensive systems of measuring the quality of agricultural land assessment so that we may increase our knowledge of the potential of land for agricultural purposes.

Robert P. Murdoch
General Manager

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT BRANCH

M. Jean Sherwood, Executive Secretary

Kay Johnson
Sherrill Olson
Rose Langston
Patricia Redman

Planning, Processing and Technical Branch

Jim P. Plotnikoff, Director

Planning Staff

Mark Gillis
Barry Smith

Research and Processing Branch

Kabel Atwall
Colin Fry
Shirley Brightman
Martin Hilmer
Brian Underhill
Brenda Felker
Everett Lew

Mapping Branch

Barbara Snyder

SOILS AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT BRANCH

KIRK B. MILLER, DIRECTOR

SOILS BRANCH

Brian McBride, Soils Specialist

FINE TUNING BRANCH

Elizabeth Zweck von Zweckenburg - Soils Specialist
J. Jay Simons - Planner
Gordon Bednard - Technical Assistant